Does Anything Exist?

This morning, when someone began his question with the usual: 'I' want to know....., Shri Maharaj, did without waiting for the translation, began to laugh and interrupted with a counter question in English: 'I' — Who? Then he went back to his native Marathi and said, "It is really so very simple, this that I am trying to convey to you, to impart to you. You would find it so too, if only you could keep this 'I' aside when you listen to me. If you would only REMEMBER that so long as there is an autonomous entity that is volitionally trying to understand what I am saying, that empty entity will not — CANNOT — even begin to understand what I am saying. Any apprehension of metaphysical revelation presupposes a fasting, enquiring, open, 'vacant' mind in which such apprehension could ENTER. Any 'independent' entity presupposes a conditioned mind full of concepts, resisting the entry of anything that I want to impart. Do I make myself clear, even now, I wonder!

"Even though I use words, and you hear them, the imparting will be possible only if the subject and the object merge in the hearing of it. Begin at the beginning and examine whether there is exists anyone or anything to talk or listen — or is there merely FUNCTIONING — talking and listening and apprehending: experiencing.

"When you think of something existing, you think in terms of only something which is objective; 'science' is only concerned with objective phenomena; whereas I think of all objects, including you, as nothing more or less than appearances in consciousness, and therefore as not existing. Finally, subjectivity, without any objective quality, obviously cannot exist. So what EXISTS? There cannot be such a thing as existence — or non-existence.

"Let us come back to the visitor who wanted to ask some question earlier this morning. He has come here, perhaps with some inconvenience and at not inconsiderable expense, to seek that kind of knowledge which would enable him to make himself into a better individual — a saint, a sage, a dnyaani. Now do you understand why I could not help laughing — not at him but at the tricks 'Maya' plays with her illusions.

"Think for a moment: who — or what — is thinking in terms of some transformation, changing from one state to another, in terms of self-improvement? Surely, it is nothing more than an appearance in consciousness, a character in a movie, an individual in a dream — a dreamed pseudo-entity considering himself subject to the workings of the infamous 'Karma'.

"How could such a dreamed character 'perfect' itself into anything other than its dreamed self? How could a shadow perfect itself into a its substance? How could there be any 'awakening' from the dream, except by re-solving their true identity as the SOURCE of the dream, the manifestation?

"And the 'awakening' consists in apprehending that there is no perceiver of the phenomenal world but that the essential nature and purpose of all phenomena is merely the PERCEIVING of phenomena — that is, FUNCTIONING in THIS-THERE-NOW; that every sentient being, as the potential source of all experience, experiences the apparent universe as what he is.

"The very first step in understanding what this is all about is to give up the active volitional concept of an 'I', as a separate entity, and accept the passive role of perceiving and functioning as a process."